



Remarks by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

at the General Debate of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under the auspices of ECOSOC on the theme *Ensuring that no one is left behind*

New York, 20 July 2016

[Please check against delivery]

Mr President,

Ensuring that no one is left behind is a core principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UNAIDS welcomes this as the main theme of the first HLPF since the Agenda's adoption.

In September last year, world leaders made an ambitious commitment to ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Last month, the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on HIV and AIDS adopted a Political Declaration which sets bold time-bound targets to fast track the AIDS response in order to end the epidemic by 2030.

Leaving no one behind and addressing the needs of all people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV will be essential for achieving these commitments and targets. Yet, as noted in the recent Political Declaration, key populations, including men who have sex with men, sex workers, people who inject drugs, prisoners and transgender people are globally at higher risk of HIV. Young women and adolescent girls, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, are more than twice as likely to become HIV-positive than young men and boys of the same age. About half of all people living with HIV do not have access to treatment, with glaring coverage gaps for children and adolescents. Migrants, displaced persons and persons with disabilities also face increased vulnerability to HIV. The world will not be able to end the AIDS epidemic if these groups continue to be left behind in the response.

In the 2016 Declaration, member states made commitments to reverse these trends, by pledging to address persistent inequalities, including gender inequality, stigma and discrimination, violence, harmful gender norms and punitive laws. The 2016 Declaration was a first in the UN for mentioning 'transgender people' and UNAIDS applauds member states for this.

A few points are particularly pertinent in the context of the HLPF, given the key role it will play in monitoring progress against the 2030 Agenda. In the Declaration, countries pledged to increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable disaggregated data and to introduce mutual accountability mechanisms, that are transparent and inclusive, with the active involvement of people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV and relevant civil society and private sector stakeholders. They called for increased and sustained investment in the advocacy and leadership role of civil society, including young women and girls. These measures and strategic partnerships with stakeholders will be essential in rendering visible those being left behind and ensuring their inclusion in decision-making and policy development.

The AIDS response has strong foundations on which to build to make these commitments come to life and to spur progress across the SDGs. For example, the Global AIDS Response Progress Reporting is one of global health's most rigorous and inclusive reporting mechanisms, in which civil society are involved in the collection and validation of data, and has galvanized accountability for results. Young people are leading the way in establishing youth-led and data-driven accountability mechanisms for young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights through ACT!2015, a global youth initiative supported by UNAIDS.

Given this combination of experience, the AIDS response is well-positioned to support the development of community-owned strategic information across the 2030 Agenda, and UNAIDS is ready to help countries and others to do so.

Thank you.